

BLUFFTON TOWN COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
FEBRUARY 9, 2016

Mayor Lisa Sulka called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Council members present were Mayor Pro Tempore Larry Toomer, Fred Hamilton, Harry Lutz and Dan Wood. Town Manager Marc Orlando, Deputy Town Manager Scott Marshall, Assistant Town Manager/Executive Director of the Bluffton Public Development Corporation Shawn Leininger, Finance Director Shirley Freeman, Director of Growth Management Kendra Lelie, Director of Engineering Kim Jones, Chief of Police Joey Reynolds, and Town Attorney Terry Finger were also in attendance.

Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation was given by Mayor Sulka.

Adoption of Agenda:

Toomer moved to adopt the agenda as presented. Hamilton seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Adoption of Minutes:

- a. Regular Meeting of January 13, 2016:
Wood moved to adopt the Minutes of January 13, 2016 as presented. Hamilton seconded. The motion carried unanimously.
- b. Quarterly Workshop of January 19, 2016:
Toomer moved to adopt the Minutes of January 19, 2016 as presented. Lutz seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Presentations, Celebrations and Recognitions:

- a. **Mayor Sulka** recognized the following Bluffton School District Character Education Students of the Month:
 - Grace Williams, Red Cedar Elementary – December – Character Trait – Compassion
 - Johnnie Bryant, Red Cedar Elementary – January – Character Trait – Perseverance

Consideration of Town of Bluffton Community Needs Assessment:

Michele Knight, Community & Economic Development Director, Lowcountry Council of Governments stated the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program is designed to provide assistance to units of local governments in improving economic opportunities and meeting community revitalization needs. Knight gave an overview of objectives and requirements such as benefiting low-to-moderate income (LMI) persons; aid in the prevention or elimination of slums or blight; and meet other urgent community needs posing a serious threat to the health or welfare of the community, where other financial resources are not available to meet such needs.

(Continued)

Consideration of Town of Bluffton Community Needs Assessment – Continued:

Public Hearing:

Mayor Sulka opened public hearing at 6:23 p.m.

Staff member Gerry Diaz, a language translator, was available at this public hearing for those needing assistance.

Public Comments:

There were none.

Public hearing closed at 6:23 p.m.

Needs Assessment Priorities:

Kim Jones, Director of Engineering, stated that Town Council prioritized community needs in 2015 as follows:

1. Infrastructure including sewer, water and drainage;
2. Transportation & pedestrian safety; and
3. Restoration of properties of facilities of special value to the community

Town Staff continues to receive recommendations from citizens regarding community needs, and communications include phone calls, face-to-face discussions, and comments at public meetings. The following community needs were identified by multiple citizens as their key suggestions:

1. Infrastructure improvements including sewer, water and drainage
2. Transportation & Pedestrian Safety
3. Affordable Housing for Low to Moderate Income (LMI) individuals, families and seniors
4. Residential Rehabilitation of Housing for safe and dry housing
5. Restoration of Properties or facilities of special value to the community

Hamilton moved that Town Council should establish the following community needs as its top priorities:

- 1. Transportation & Pedestrian Study**
- 2. Infrastructure Improvements including sewer, water and drainage**
- 3. Restoration of properties or facilities of special value to the community**
- 4. Residential Rehabilitation of Housing for safe and dry housing**

Wood seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Public Comments:

Skip Hoagland, 61 Sparwheel Lane, Hilton Head, accused Mayor Sulka and Town Manager Orlando of promoting the Hilton Head-Bluffton Chamber of Commerce over the Greater Bluffton Chamber of Commerce by assisting in a membership drive.

Donna Della Rosa, 122 Bainbridge Way, stated her concerns on too much development in Bluffton, especially Buckwalter Place. She requested Council to save some land and preserve the beauty.

Communications from Mayor and Council:

Toomer stated that Beaufort County Councilman Tabor Vaux's wife and baby are doing well.

Mayor Sulka stated that Town Council attended the Municipal Association's Home Town Action Legislature Day and training in Columbia on February 2nd & 3rd. It was good networking with Legislatures and other municipalities.

Mayor Sulka recognized the Bluffton Ballers and the Carolina Ballers.

Review of a Proposed Amendment to the Unified Development Ordinance, Section 6.5 Sustainable Development Incentives, Establishing a Density Bonus Incentive for the Development of Workforce/Affordable Housing:

Kendra Lelie, Director of Growth Management, stated Town Council requested a review of a proposed amendment to the Unified Development Ordinance, Section 6.5 Sustainable Development Incentives, establishing a density bonus incentive for the development of workforce/affordable housing.

In response to the housing needs identified in the Housing Chapter of the amended 2007 Comprehensive Plan, the Affordable Housing Committee adopted a Neighborhood Assistance Program Strategies Plan (Plan) that provides strategies to ensure a comprehensive and sustainable approach to the promotion of affordable and safe housing, and quality neighborhoods. The Plan contains a set of objectives, strategies and benchmarks to guide the policies and use of affordable housing funds over a five-year period.

One of the goals of the Plan is to expand opportunities for decent, safe and affordable housing. The Affordable Housing Committee established several objectives to incentivize the production of affordable housing with a benchmark of using different techniques to realize the private construction of 16 affordable/workforce housing units over the next five years.

The Affordable Housing Committee reviewed and recommended the density bonus incentive ordinance as one technique to realize the objective of incentivizing the private development of affordable/workforce housing.

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Review of a Proposed Amendment to the Unified Development Ordinance, Section 6.5 Sustainable Development Incentives, Establishing a Density Bonus Incentive for the Development of Workforce/Affordable Housing – Continued:

On November 3, 2015, the Affordable Housing Committee recommended the following amendments to Section 6.5 Sustainable Development Incentives of the Unified Development Ordinance:

1. Increase the term of affordability from ten years to thirty years.
A deed restriction, which is the term of affordability, is placed on an affordable/workforce unit to ensure that the unit remains affordable to low and moderate income households for a specific period of time. The expansion of the time required for the term of the deed restriction will enable the Town to increase the supply of affordable/workforce housing for a longer term which ensures a continual stock of affordable units for low and moderate-income families.
2. The addition of a density bonus as another incentive for the production of affordable/workforce housing will allow for an increase in the number of dwelling units on the site provided a certain number of affordable/workforce dwelling units are provided. The following is the proposed language to be included as an incentive within Section 6.5 Sustainable Development Incentives for applications of affordable/workforce housing developments within a place type and/or existing neighborhoods as designated on the Growth Framework Map specified in the Town's Comprehensive Plan or having an approved Neighborhood Plan:

Density Bonus. Any development providing workforce/affordable housing within a Zoning District that explicitly provides for a permitted base density shall receive a density bonus as provided below:

Table 6.5.4: Density Bonus Incentive

<i>Percentage of Workforce/Affordable Housing Units</i>	<i>Density Bonus</i>
<i>Minimum 25%</i>	<i>25%</i>
<i>26-50%</i>	<i>50%</i>
<i>51-75%</i>	<i>75%</i>
<i>76+ %</i>	<i>100%</i>

All market-rate units shall be provided on site, except that, in a development undertaken in phases, stages, or otherwise developed in distinct sections, such units may be located in other phases, stages, or section, subject to the terms of the Development Plan. (Continued)

Review of a Proposed Amendment to the Unified Development Ordinance, Section 6.5 Sustainable Development Incentives, Establishing a Density Bonus Incentive for the Development of Workforce/Affordable Housing – Continued:

Design guidelines. The project shall at a minimum meet the applicable design requirements in Article 5. The UDO Administrator shall review the project and determine if additional community features such as but not limited to additional open space, parking, lighting, streetscape elements (bike racks, street trees, sidewalks, multi-use paths), buffer plantings, tree preservation and architectural enhancements are appropriate based upon the ultimate density of the project.

Town Council was in consensus for Staff to proceed to the next step for Planning Commission review in March.

FY 2016 Capital Projects Updates:

Jeremy Ritchie, Assistant Director of Engineering, gave an overview.

- **May River Road Streetscape Project:**

Adopted in 2006 by the Town of Bluffton Town Council, the Old Town Master Plan presents a comprehensive set of guiding design principles and urban design directives. It further provides policy guidance for the Bluffton Historic District. In this regard, the Old Town Master Plan advises that the Town create walkable streets, enhance the tree canopy, and manage stormwater runoff by mimicking natural stormwater systems. It provides that the Town and community craft unique projects with the intent of preserving and enhancing the Bluffton character.

Improvement of the May River Road corridor is an implementation step of the Old Town Master Plan, supported by the Comprehensive Plan and the SC 46 Corridor Management Plan. The final phase of the May River Streetscape will improve approximately 2,875 linear feet of May River Road, beginning at the intersection of Jennifer Court, and ending approximately 100 linear feet east of the intersection with Pin Oak Street. The addition of sidewalks, curb and gutter, on-street parking, landscaping and lighting will improve the appearance of the corridor, while increasing safety for pedestrians. With the completion of this project, pedestrian connectivity is provided from Old Town to Buck Island Road.

The proposed project budget is approximately \$1,950,000, including design & permitting, construction, construction management, and landscaping.

Current Status: The SCDOT is reviewing plans for design, as well as confirmation that the proposed easements are adequate for the completion of the project. Upon SCDOT authorization, the next step is to formally approach property owners for easement acquisition. (Continued)

FY 2016 Capital Projects Updates:

- **Goethe/Shults Sidewalks Project:**

According to the Comprehensive Plan, consideration must be given to provide safe pedestrian access to parks and schools, where children walk, and along streets that connect major activity centers or where pedestrian comfort is impacted by heavy vehicular traffic. Sidewalks accommodate safe and convenient travel for pedestrians, as well as for providing the residents of Bluffton with alternative means of transportation and opportunities for exercise and recreation.

The Goethe/Shults Sidewalks project will provide for the installation of approximately 7,300 linear feet of sidewalk along Goethe Road, Shults Road, Hilderbrand Road, Eighth Avenue, and Ninth Avenue. With the completion of this project, pedestrian connectivity for the Goethe/Shults Community is provided from Bluffton Parkway to May River Road and Old Town.

The proposed project budget is \$425,000, including design & permitting, and construction.

Current Status: Currently on Line 9, *Final Design Changes and Town Approval*, and Line 14, *Hire Appraiser*. Next steps are to begin site permitting, and to approach property owners for easement acquisition.

Consideration of an Ordinance Approving an Amendment to the Master Plan for Property Located on Simmonsville Road North of Fuller Court Consisting of Approximately 1.9 Acres – First Reading:

Kendra Lelie, Director of Growth Management, gave an overview. On October 26, 2015, Land Asset Holdings, LLC submitted an application for an Amendment of the Master Plan for a 1.9 acre tract located on Simmonsville Road (the "Property"). This property is part of the Rose Hill Planned Unit Development (PUD). The purpose of the Application is to change the designated use from Multi-family residential (16 du/acre) to limited commercial uses including self-storage facilities with outdoor storage for vehicles, recreational vehicles and boats, general office, medical offices and health services, car wash, research and laboratory, and artisan workshop, with site specific buffer and setback requirements for the property. These uses are currently allowed within the Rose Hill PUD.

At the request of the Applicant, the application was withdrawn from the January 13, 2016 Town Council agenda.

(Continued)

Consideration of an Ordinance Approving an Amendment to the Master Plan for Property Located on Simmonsville Road North of Fuller Court Consisting of Approximately 1.9 Acres – First Reading – Continued:

The Property is a currently undeveloped triangular shaped lot and is bounded on the west by Simmonsville Road, on the north by a Santee Cooper Power line Right-of-Way, on the southeast by Bluffton Park Business Park (Bluffton Self Storage - Lot 4), and on the southwest by New Hope Village Residential Subdivision. Lot 4 is owned by Bluffton Self Storage, LLC and is currently developed as a self-storage facility. Bluffton Self Storage, LLC has a contract with the Applicant to purchase the property contingent upon the approval of this Application. If approved, Bluffton Self Storage will connect the two properties via an internal access road and utilize the subject property for outdoor and covered storage of vehicles, recreational vehicles and boats. All of these requested uses are presently allowed by the commercial designation in the Rose Hill PUD. The residential use could still be made available to the property in the future with a Town Council approval of a Master Plan Amendment.

The Property is part of the Rose Hill PUD Master Plan Area that was originally approved by Beaufort County in 1980 which included Rose Hill, Belfair, Westbury Park, the Estates at Westbury Park, Plantation Business Park, Sheridan Park and other residential and commercial properties. The Rose Hill PUD Master Plan was amended several times by Beaufort County prior to being annexed into the Town of Bluffton in December of 2005 as part of the Buck Island-Simmonsville Neighborhood Annexation petition.

While the PUD zoning district allows for a broad range of uses that includes single-family estates, single-family (various densities), single-family patio, recreation, multi-family (various densities) and commercial uses, the original and existing Land Use designation for the Property is Multi-Family Residential with a density of 16 dwelling units per acre (MF-16). With the adoption of the Unified Development Ordinance and associated Zoning Map in 2011, the majority of the Rose Hill PUD parcels were reassigned from PUD zoning to a General Mixed Use Zoning. However, a few Rose Hill parcels adjacent to, and including the subject Property remained PUD zoning with a Land Use designation of MF-16.

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Consideration of an Ordinance Approving an Amendment to the Master Plan for Property Located on Simmonsville Road North of Fuller Court Consisting of Approximately 1.9 Acres – First Reading – Continued:

Planning Commission finds that the requirements of Section 3.9.3 of the Unified Development Ordinance are met and recommends approval to Town Council with the following conditions:

- a. Permitted land uses shall be the same as the adjacent property within Bluffton Park known as Lot 4 and located in the Bluffton Park Business Park district limited to self-storage facilities with outdoor storage for vehicles, recreational vehicles, and boats, general office, medical offices and health services, car wash, research and laboratory, and artisan workshop.
- b. Street Right-of-Way Setback and Buffer: 50 feet
- c. Setback and Buffer to Residential Use: 25 feet
- d. Setback and Buffer to Non-Residential Use for non-structural storage of vehicles and items: 10 feet
- e. Setback and Buffer to Non-Residential Use of storage in/under structures: 25 feet
- f. Conformance with the buffer requirements found in UDO Section 5.3.7.B.3.
- g. Conformance with the development standards set forth in the UDO or any future modification thereof.
- h. Inclusion of a heavy buffer to provide more opaque screening within the 25' buffer area.

Toomer moved to have first reading on an Ordinance Approving an Amendment to the Master Plan for Property Located on Simmonsville Road North of Fuller Court Consisting of Approximately 1.9 Acres with the following conditions:

- 1. Planning Commission's recommendation**
- 2. Conduct a traffic count analysis**
- 3. Notification of Fuller Court's adjacent property owners**
- 4. Privacy fence**

Hamilton seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

An Ordinance Amending the Budget for Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2016- First Reading:

Shirley Freeman, Director of Finance gave an overview of the following:

- General Fund:
 - Intergovernmental Agreement with the Town Hilton Head Island for Weekend Warrant Services
 - Drug Forfeiture Account Spending
 - Traffic Enforcement Grant Award
- Capital Improvement Program Fund:
 - Parks & Recreation Development Fund (PARD) Grant Award for DuBois Park Improvements
 - Boat Ramp and Local Accommodation Tax Use of Funds for Oyster Factory Park Improvements

The proposed ordinance will increase the Town of Bluffton's General Fund \$226,371 for Warrant Services, Drug Forfeiture Spending and a Traffic Enforcement Grant and the Capital Improvements Program (CIP) Fund \$220,000 for Oyster Factory Park project and DuBois Park improvement project.

In the General Fund, \$5,850 is to be added for the intergovernmental agreement with the Town of Hilton Head Island for weekend warrant services and \$15,000 (\$2,000 received this year and \$13,000 received last year) for additional drug forfeiture account spending. The Town received a grant from the Office of Highway Safety and Justice Program to establish a Traffic Enforcement Unit. The initial grant period is for 2016 and includes two traffic officer positions, vehicles and equipment in the amount of \$205,521. It is 100% funding with no match required by the Town. It can be renewed for up to 3 years, however we have to re-apply every year and the award is dependent on funding through the federal government. The Police have applied for this grant the past couple of years in response to the traffic fatalities we were seeing in our Town. However, this is the first year they have received any funding.

In the CIP Fund, \$160,000 is to be added to the Oyster Factory Park budgeted funds from Boat Ramp fees fund balance and Local Accommodations taxes and \$60,000 to the Parks and Recreation Improvements project (\$48,000 from the PARD Grant and \$12,000 from Hospitality Tax) for DuBois Park.

Hamilton moved to have first reading on an Ordinance Amending the Budget for Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2016. Toomer seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Consideration of a Resolution Approving the Calhoun Street and Adjacent Area Study:

Kendra Lelie, Director of Growth Management, gave an overview.

Adopted in 2006 by the Town of Bluffton Town Council, the Old Town Master Plan presents a comprehensive set of guiding design principles and urban design directives. It further provides policy guidance for the Bluffton Historic District. In this regard, the Old Town Master Plan advises that the Town create walkable streets, enhance the tree canopy, and manage stormwater runoff by mimicking natural stormwater systems. It provides that the Town and community craft unique projects with the intent of preserving and enhancing the Bluffton character.

In early 2014, the Town of Bluffton entered into a contract with Thomas & Hutton Engineering Co. to establish a public infrastructure master plan and policy guidelines as part of the Calhoun Street and Adjacent Area Study. Elements addressed include street design, parking, streetscape amenities, sidewalks, crosswalks, stormwater management, tree canopy, lighting, signage and utilities.

Since the project kick-off meeting in February 2014, Town Staff has coordinated several public meetings to obtain community input on project area design alternatives and policy solutions. The public meetings held include:

1. June 2014: 2-day Open House and Workshop at the First Baptist Church;
2. December 2014: Presentation of findings at Town Council;
3. October 2015: Presentation of findings and request for feedback on the draft Calhoun Street and Adjacent Area Study at the Town Council Quarterly Workshop;
4. November 2015: Presentation of various immediate action steps (T-striping, bike racks, signage, lighting and the facilitation of shared parking agreements) including restricted parking and no parking in the Calhoun Street Study area; and
5. January 13, 2016: Presentation of the schematic streetscape design at the Town Council Workshop.

During previous workshop meetings, a concern related to pedestrian safety surfaced. In response, the Urban Design concept plan provided several alternatives for addressing pedestrian safety including the provision of bulb-outs. At the January 13, 2016 Town Council Workshop, there was discussion regarding the proposed bulb-outs at the intersection of May River Road and Calhoun Street and their impact on the flow of traffic along May River Road. There was concern from Town Council that these bulb-outs would restrict traffic flow. At the time of final engineering design for the Calhoun Street and adjacent area improvements, Staff will not entertain bulb-outs at the May River Road and Calhoun Street location and will work with the consultant to implement other pedestrian safety elements.

(Continued)

Consideration of a Resolution Approving the Calhoun Street and Adjacent Area Study – Continued:

Notes:

1. Time restricted parking is contingent on the successful facilitation of shared parking agreements between the Calhoun Street businesses and available lots for overflow parking.
2. Staff has been in contact with representatives from Cornerstone Church and they have indicated a willingness to participate in shared parking agreements with the Calhoun Street businesses. Staff has contacted representatives of Carson Cottages and the Old Town Merchant's Society to discuss the opportunity. Staff is waiting for a response.

The Calhoun Street and Adjacent Area Study is compilation of several elements that led ultimately to a final urban design plan for the Calhoun Street corridor. This Study will serve as a guide in directing Capital Improvement Projects and applicable policy decisions. The Calhoun Street and Adjacent Area Study include:

1. Public Preference Survey:
A public preference survey exercise was conducted in June 2014 during a two-day public input workshop. The survey was designed to gather information from the public on desired land use, street design, parking options, environmental issues, street lighting, public safety and signage. The summarized results of the survey were incorporated into the design process.
2. Traffic and Parking Analysis:
The consultant and Town Staff conducted a traffic and parking assessment which included an evaluation of intersections to understand need for improvements, existing traffic flow, existing parking conditions, future parking conditions at build-out and a summary of policy and design recommendations.
3. Opportunities and Constraints Report and Mapping:
The data gathered in the previous phases of the Study was utilized in the development of a parking summary which included options for increasing public parking opportunities, traffic calming and pedestrian safety alternatives and vehicular and pedestrian connectivity alternatives.
4. Visualization Exercises:
 - a. Artists Renderings:
Artists sketches were provided during a charrette session with Staff to help visualize proposed urban design alternatives.

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Consideration of a Resolution Approving the Calhoun Street and Adjacent Area Study – Continued:

- b. 3-D Design Considerations:
A 3-D visualization of the Calhoun Street corridor was provided at the October 20, 2015 Town Council Workshop meeting and provided a street view of proposed streetscape improvements. The feedback received from this visualization exercise was utilized in the final urban design plan. While a few still shots of the 3-D visualization are included in the Study, access to the full visualization exercise is available through the website <https://round.me/tour/12796/view/31306/>.
5. Urban Design Plan for the Calhoun Street Study Corridor:
The Urban Design Plan depicts proposed improvements for vehicular and pedestrian circulation, parking opportunities, sidewalks, street amenities, street trees and lighting, stormwater management, signage and utilities. This plan will be utilized as the guiding document for subsequent engineered plans for future Capital Improvement Projects.
6. Cost Opinions:
Probable cost opinions from the consultant were provided based on the final Urban Design Plan for Calhoun Street, Bridge Street and Dr. Mellichamp Drive.

Next Steps: Recommendations to Town Council of Capital Improvement Projects and subsequent FY2017 Capital Project Program budget requests at the FY2017 Town Council Strategic Planning and Budget workshops – First/Second Quarter 2016.

Hamilton moved to adopt the Resolution Approving the Calhoun Street and Adjacent Area Study. Lutz seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Consent Agenda:

- a. Monthly Department Reports: Police, Finance/Administration, Engineering, Don Ryan Center for Innovation, and Growth Management
- b. Town Manager's Monthly Report

Wood moved to adopt the Consent Agenda as presented. Toomer seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Public Comments:

There were none.

Executive Session:

- a. Personnel Matters Relating to Appointments of Boards, Committees, and Commissions (Pursuant to SC FOIA Act Section 30-4-70(a)(1))
- b. Legal Advice from Town Attorney (Pursuant to SC FOIA Act Section 30-4-70(a)(2))

Lutz moved for Town Council to go into Executive Session to discuss the abovementioned items. Hamilton seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Town Council entered into Executive Session at 8:12 p.m.

Actions from the Result of Executive Session:

Mayor Sulka called the meeting back to order at 9:11 p.m. and announced no votes were taken.

Wood moved to appoint the following:

James Taylor – Don Ryan for Innovation Board of Directors

Stephan Halpern – Board of Zoning Appeals

Allison Tucker and Ronald Williams – Planning Commission

Toomer seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Toomer moved to appoint the following Council members:

Harry Lutz – Bluffton Public Development Corporation

Larry Toomer – Lowcountry Area Alliance for Healthy Youth Community Board

Dan Wood – Lowcountry Council of Government Board of Directors

Larry Toomer – Southern Beaufort County Regional Plan Implementation Committee

Dan Wood – Affordable Housing Committee

Larry Toomer – May River Watershed Action Plan Implementation Committee

Harry Lutz – Section 504 Americans with Disabilities Act Grievance Committee

Wood seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 9:13.

Mayor

Town Clerk